



APPENDIX J

Excerpts from

FINAL REPORT ON THE WALKABLE COMMUNITIES WORKSHOPS

This is a report on the design charette held in Troy on June 17, 2004. The Troy Walkable Communities Workshop was held by the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission with assistance from the Troy Planning & Development Department and the Troy Engineering Division. Similar workshops were held in several other communities in the region.



One Step at a Time

Final Report on the Walkable Communities Workshops in the Miami Valley Region

**Dayton, Ohio
2004**

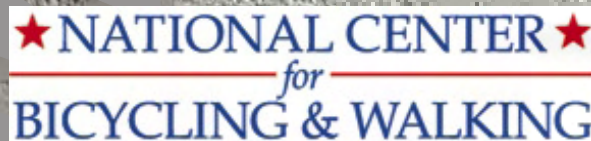


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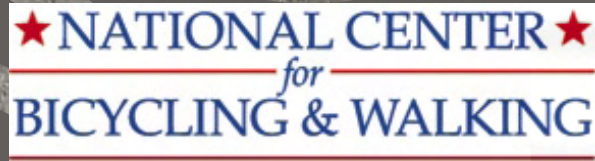
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APPENDIX B

Long Range Transportation Plan Maps



mvrpc



THE
ROBERT WOOD
JOHNSON
FOUNDATION

Letter from the MVRPC Executive Director

Every transportation trip begins and ends with the most basic mode of travel - your feet. Communities in our region were originally developed around the pedestrian and grew by way of transit and railroads. They have subsequently expanded in area and decreased in density due in part to auto travel and trucking becoming the dominant and sometimes only viable travel modes. Over the last fifty years, our communities have seen their sense of place slip away as the urban area homogenizes and spreads outward.

One of the ways our region can promote economic development and attract a skilled workforce is by building upon the quality of life it has to offer. Providing our citizens a variety of mobility options and a safe environment in which to walk or bike is vital to this effort. Creating a sense of place to our built environment is also important.

We have included pedestrian and bicycle modes in our long-range transportation plan, funded a number of pedestrian and bicycle projects and supported similar efforts by others. Participation in the Walkable Communities Workshop Program this summer has given us an opportunity to build on such efforts through a hands-on examination of our built environment and analyzing the benefits of making it more pedestrian and bike friendly once again. This report highlights the efforts of MVRPC and eight communities in our region to examine where improving walkability can make a difference and form action plans.

I want to take this opportunity to thank our eight participating local jurisdictions, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the National Center for Bicycling and Walking, and our two facilitators, Charlie Gandy and Kristin Bennett for allowing MVRPC to provide this service.

We must continue to act to humanize our built environment and offer our citizens a choice of transportation options.

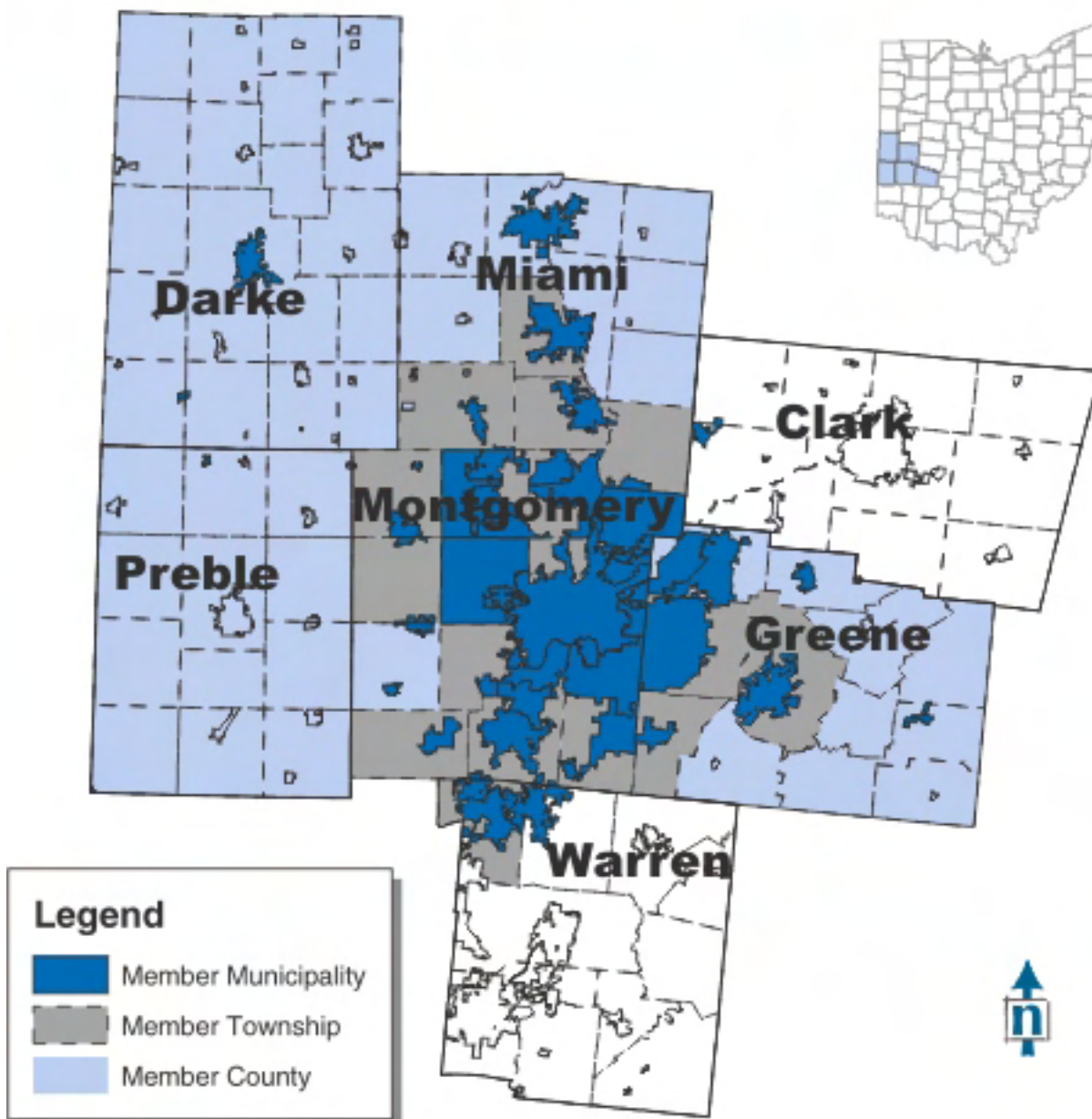
A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "P. Michael Robinette". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

P. Michael Robinette
Executive Director

About MVRPC

The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission (MVRPC) serves as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Miami Valley Region in west-central Ohio. As the designated MPO, MVRPC is responsible for developing, implementing, monitoring, and updating a variety of transportation plans that are designed to enhance the Region's competitive position, promote regional growth, improve personal mobility, and preserve the environment. MVRPC also provides community, land use, and environmental planning assistance, GIS services, aerial photography services, and serves as a data and demographics clearinghouse for the region. MVRPC currently has 50 governmental and 13 non-governmental members that constitute the full Commission. From this group, an 18 member Board of Directors is also chosen. Each governmental member pays a per capita assessment to join MVRPC. Non-governmental members, since they do not receive agency services as a member benefit, pay a flat rate to cover associated agency expenses. The Executive Director of MVRPC is Michael Robinette.

2004 MVRPC Members

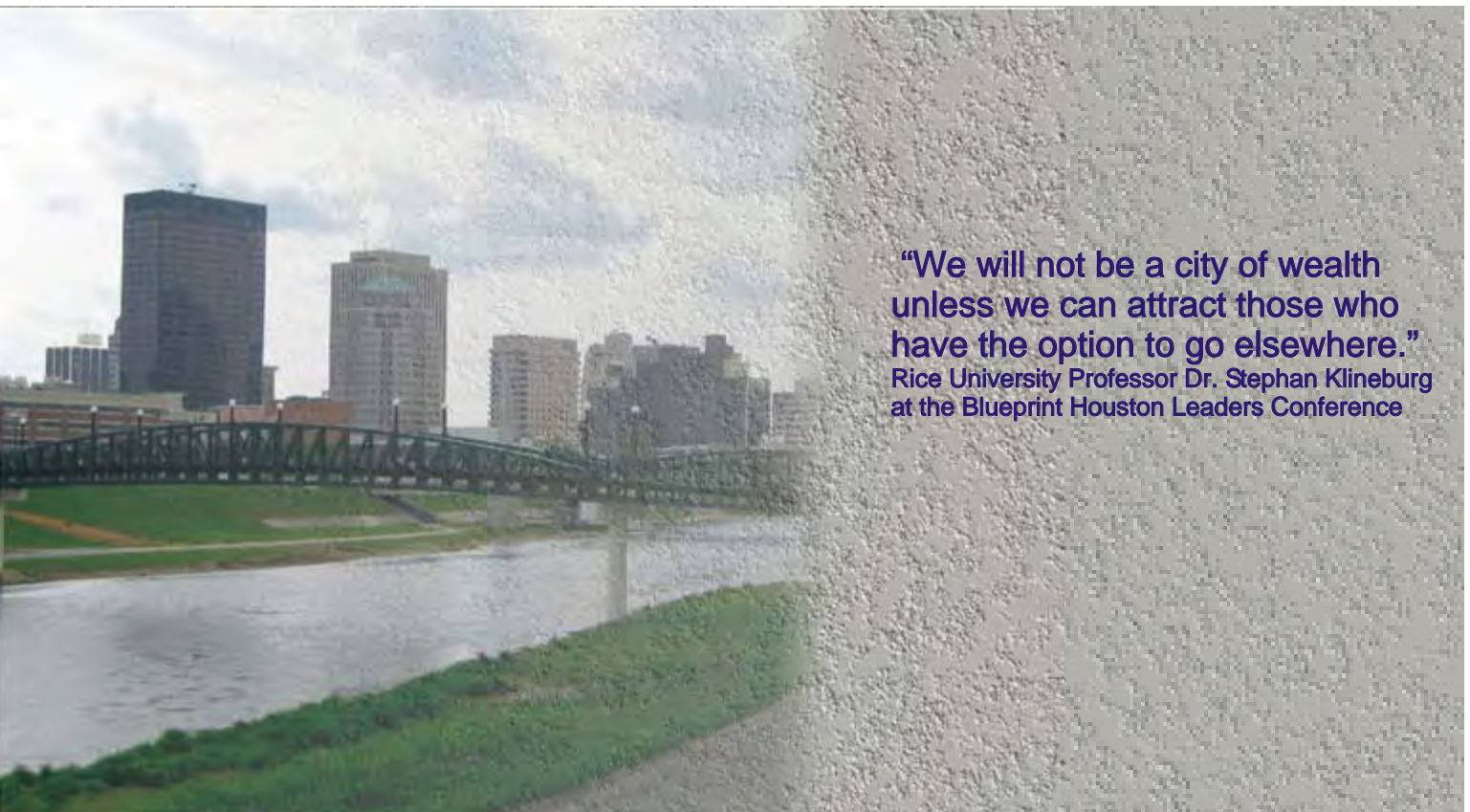


Description of the Region

There are approximately 822,000 residents in the Miami Valley Region (defined using the MPO boundaries) which includes Greene, Miami, and Montgomery Counties, and the communities of Carlisle and Franklin in northern Warren County. Dayton is the largest city in the region with approximately 166,000 residents and is situated roughly 50 miles north of Cincinnati, 70 miles west of Columbus, and 90 miles east of Indianapolis. The region covers 1,300 square miles and has 81 units of county, city, village, and township governments. Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the largest single-site employer in Ohio, is also located within the region.

One feature of the Miami Valley that sets it apart from other regions is the extensive bike and pedestrian system. The region has over 200 miles of bike/pedestrian paths and many more paths are planned for the future or already have funding secured for construction.

The Ohio Department of Development projects the population of the region to decrease 0.7 percent by the year 2030, while employment is expected to increase by 4.2 percent. The population in the suburban and predominately rural areas of the counties is projected to increase by more than five percent by 2030. The population density of urban areas within the region is expected to decrease from 7.15 persons per acre to 6.48 by 2030. These figures are consistent with the current trend of population leaving the urban core and expanding into the undeveloped areas of the counties, resulting in low-density development (Source: MVRPC 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan).



**"We will not be a city of wealth
unless we can attract those who
have the option to go elsewhere."
Rice University Professor Dr. Stephan Klineburg
at the Blueprint Houston Leaders Conference**



One Step at a Time

Relation to MVRPC Strategic Plan

Walkable Communities Workshops is a key program related to implementation of MVRPC's strategic plan. The program relates directly to the following elements of the plan:

- **Livable Communities:** We will create vibrant community centers where housing, employment, schools, places of worship, parks and services are located together, all linked by transit and other alternatives to driving alone.
- **Transportation:** We will continue to address regional transportation needs in order to support existing businesses and to enhance the region's attractiveness for future economic development opportunities.
- **Efficient Land Re-Use:** We will grow inward, not sprawl, maintain a distinct edge between developed land and open space, and protect our investment in existing cities and infrastructure.
- **Arts, Culture and Recreation:** We will provide opportunities that enhance our residents' lives and are integral to quality communities.

Walkability in the Region

The early development pattern of the region included very small settlements along the natural waterways. With the opening of canals in the early 1800s and railroads in the mid-1800s, settlements at strategic locations along those transportation routes began to grow. Given their small size and the limited transportation options of those days, these early towns were platted in a pedestrian-friendly manner. Employment and everyday services were available within a short distance. The advent of the interurban lines



in the late 1800s offered residents increased opportunities for inter-community travel, but still guided development into compact centers oriented around rail stops. Community transit service in the early 1900s reinforced this development pattern and many distinct neighborhood business districts were maintained.

Communities began to spread outward along an improved highway network in the middle of the 20th century, as auto travel became more popular and convenient. This dispersion of

land use, assisted by zoning laws originally passed to protect residential uses from noxious industrial processes, gradually isolated uses to the point auto travel became the most (and sometimes only) feasible travel mode. Beginning in the 1950s, construction of the interstate highway system accelerated the dispersal and isolation of uses. Since that time, almost all non-residential land uses have continued to consolidate and trend toward the “big box” concept, including those formerly accessed by a walk or bike ride - grocery stores, drug stores, hardware stores, book stores, schools, post offices, libraries and even churches. Retail uses left neighborhood-scaled business districts for shopping centers and left many shopping centers for malls and “big boxes” in power centers.

Today, the declining walkability is slowly beginning to reverse. Revitalization of the urban centers of the region is occurring and low-density suburban areas are beginning to provide their citizens with walkable neighborhoods and connecting paths.



Walkable Community Concept

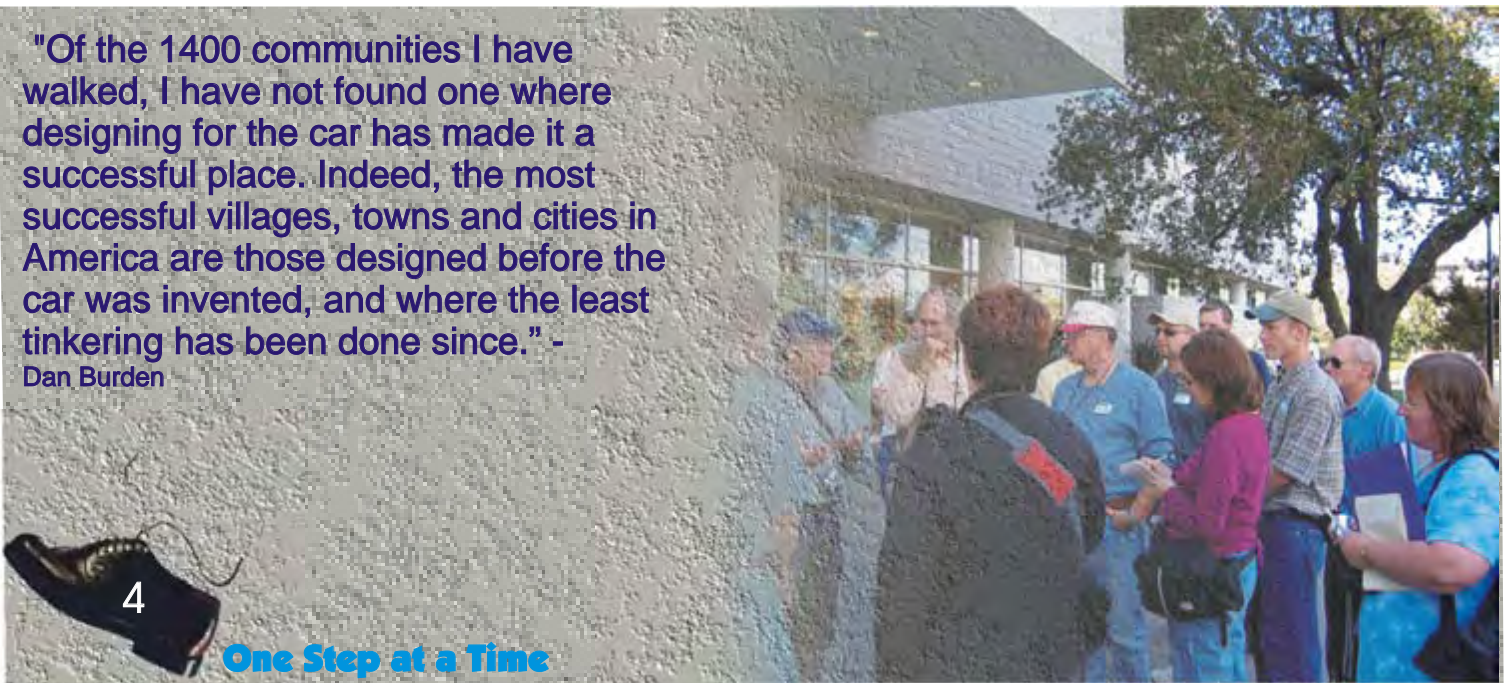
The Walkable Community Workshops program is the centerpiece of the National Center for Biking and Walking's (NCBW) community outreach and assistance efforts. The series of eight, half-day workshops bring together planners, engineers, elected officials, advocates, public health practitioners, public agency staff, and local residents to help enlighten and present ideas on how to make their community more walkable and bikeable. The workshops encourage active living by combining presentations on the latest thinking in traffic operations and community design with a walking audit where participants apply what they are learning. The Walkable Communities Workshop program carries the endorsement of the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO).

Twelve Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) were selected in September, 2003 to take part in Round II of the workshop program. The 12 MPO regions selected were Albuquerque, New Mexico, Birmingham, Alabama, Cincinnati, Ohio, Dayton, Ohio, Eugene, Oregon, Lexington, Kentucky, Louisville, Kentucky, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota, Providence, Rhode Island, San Antonio, Texas, Vancouver, Washington, and Washington, DC. A staff member from each MPO attended a three-day training course in San Jose, California in October, 2003. The staff member then coordinated his or her respective workshop program for their region. A team of two NCBW facilitators was assigned to each region for five days to present the eight workshops. MVRPC staff members Ken LeBlanc, and Eric Fredericks coordinated MVRPC's Walkable Community Workshops. The two NCBW facilitators assigned to the Miami Valley Region were Charlie Gandy and Kristin Bennett.

The Walkable Community Workshops program is a shared-cost project. Each MPO selected to host the workshops is required to pay an \$8,000 fee to NCBW and also is to provide staff and logistical support. In return, the NCBW provides around \$20,000 of training, direct support, and technical assistance to each selected MPO. Funding assistance for the NCBW portion of the costs is provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a national philanthropy that focuses on improving health and health care of all Americans. It provides grants to organizations who promote healthy communities and lifestyles.

"Of the 1400 communities I have walked, I have not found one where designing for the car has made it a successful place. Indeed, the most successful villages, towns and cities in America are those designed before the car was invented, and where the least tinkering has been done since." -

Dan Burden



Walkable Communities Facilitator Biographies

Charlie Gandy

Charlie Gandy is a recognized expert in community design, trail planning/design and bicycle and pedestrian advocacy. Gandy started his current consulting practice, Livable Communities, Inc., in 1998. Since then he has consulted with government agencies, communities, and is often enlisted by other design firms as an expert in government policies in this area.

Gandy regularly appears on television and radio commentating on government policy and legislation as it relates to pedestrian and bicycling issues. In 1998, he was named "America's #1 Bike Advocate" by Velo Business Magazine. In 1997, he was one of the "30 Most Influential People in the Bike Industry" by Bicycle Dealer Showcase Magazine.

From 1994 to 1998, Gandy was Director of Advocacy Programs for the Bicycle Federation of America. He organized and launched citizen-based advocacy groups for walking and cycling in thirty states and metropolitan areas. Gandy coached and trained advocates in all 50 states. Gandy developed and launched the Pedestrian Safety Road Shows, which have traveled to more than 250 communities. Gandy also founded and served as the first Executive Director of the Texas Bicycle Coalition (TBC) from 1990 to 1994.

Gandy served as a Member of the Texas House of Representatives for Dallas, Texas from 1983 to 1985. As a house member he passed several bills improving public safety and was a leader in Texas Education Reform. In 1985, Governor Mark White appointed Mr. Gandy to manage the Office of State/Federal Relations in Austin. Gandy has served on the National Board of American Youth Hostels and was appointed to the Austin Parks and Recreation Board. Mr. Gandy graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in 1980 with a B.A. Degree in Political Science. He has traveled extensively around the world, and enjoys hiking, cycling, and camping. He lives in Austin, Texas and has two children.



Walkable Communities Facilitator Biographies

Kristin Bennett

Kristin Bennett, AICP, is a specialist in bicycle and pedestrian transportation and trail planning and development with nearly 10 years of experience. Presently, Kristin works for the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in the Rochester, New York region, where she has been providing her specialized expertise and support to the region's 200 municipalities for the past seven years. Prior to moving to Upstate New York, she worked in a similar capacity at the MPO in the Grand Rapids, Michigan area. Additionally, she is a Board member of the New York State Bicycling Coalition (NYBC) and the Genesee Valley Bicycle Dealers Association as well as an active member of the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (APBP). Kristin lives with her husband and five pets in a walkable neighborhood in the City of Rochester where she travels by bicycle, on foot, or by bus to most places.



Local Community Workshop Coordinators

MVRPC

Ken LeBlanc Director of Community and Regional Planning

Eric Fredericks Regional Planner

Local Community Workshop Leaders

Xenia

Nimfa Simpson, AICP
City Planner

Centerville/Washington Township

Ryan Lee
Planner

Kettering

Tom Robillard, AICP
Planning and Development Director

Dayton

Gregory Gaines, AICP
Director, Planning and Business Development, Downtown Dayton Partnership

Gregory DeLong
Planner, City of Dayton

West Carrollton

David Humphreys, AICP
Director, Planning and Economic Development

Piqua

Tom Zechman
Public Works Director

Troy

Gregg Harris, AICP
Assistant Development Director

Brookville

Jeff Sewert
Assistant Municipal Manager

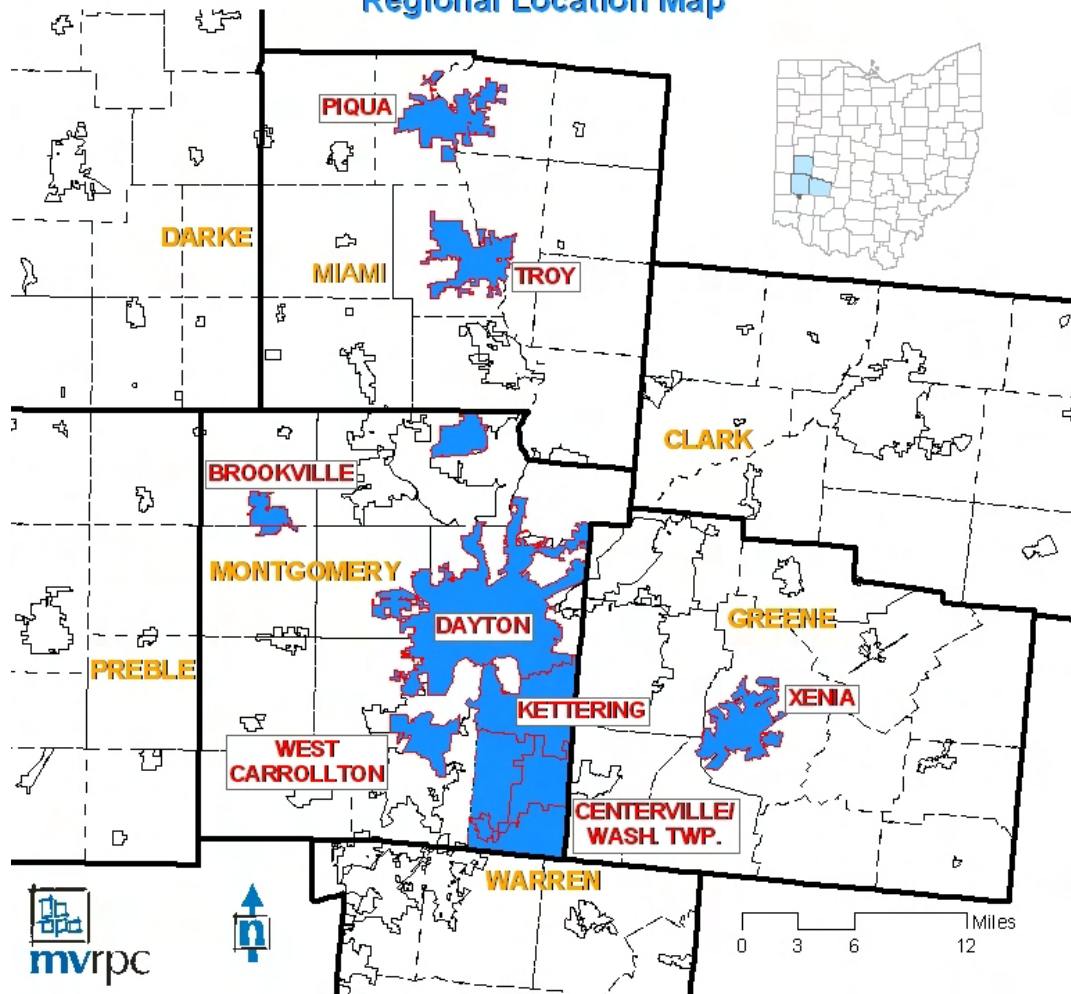


Workshop Schedule and Locations

June 14-18, 2004

Xenia	Monday, June 14	1pm
Centerville/Washington Twp	Tuesday, June 15	8am
Kettering	Tuesday, June 15	1pm
Dayton	Wednesday, June 16	8am
West Carrollton	Wednesday, June 16	1pm
Piqua	Thursday, June 17	8am
Troy	Thursday, June 17	1pm
Brookville	Friday, June 18	8am

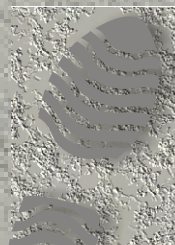
2004 Walkable Communities Workshops
Regional Location Map



One Step at a Time

Troy

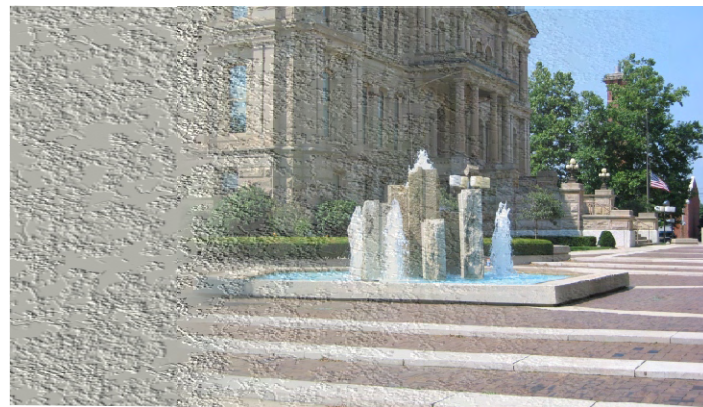
Thursday, June 17, 2004 1pm
Hayner Cultural Center
Population: 21,999 (2000 Census)



Area Background

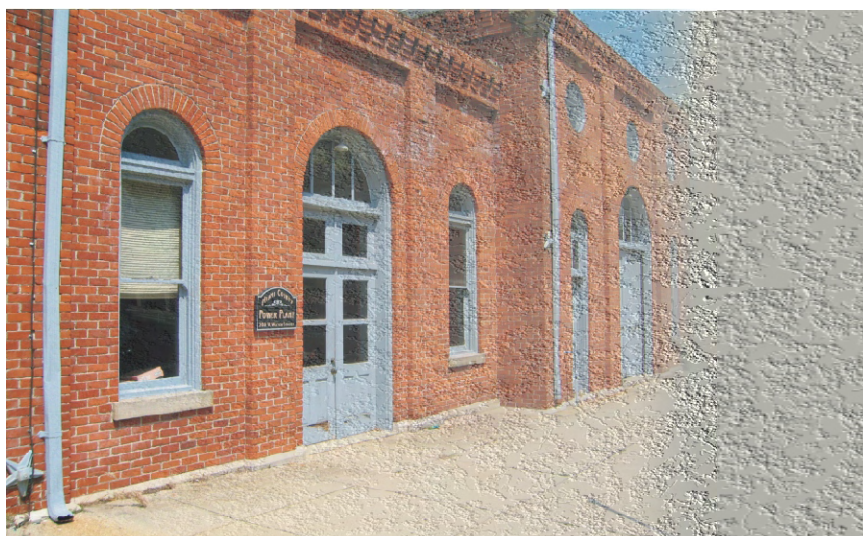
The City of Troy also chose the downtown as its workshop focus area, particularly along Water and Main Streets and the Public Square. Water Street runs west to east along the south bank of the Great Miami River.

Many large historic homes line the street, with commercial and public buildings mixed into the neighborhood. The buildings on the street have little or no setback. There are also several parking lots for county and city employees, some with river overlooks. Other uses on the street include a historic power station, a historic county courthouse, law offices, the “WE”



sculpture (a memorial of the 1913 flood), Hayner Cultural Center, the Historical Museum, Hayner Distillery Building, The Brewery, and several civic buildings including the public library. Main Street serves as the main east-west arterial of Troy and runs through the Public Square and traffic circle downtown. There is a 'European feel' in the downtown as building fronts edge the sidewalks with streetscape heights of 25 to 40 feet. Numerous variety shops, cafés, bars, and restaurants, many with outdoor seating, can be seen on all corners of the Square. There are public open and green spaces decorated with art, landscaping, benches, pavers, and decorative lighting, and in the center of the traffic circle is a large landscaped fountain.

Workshop Focus

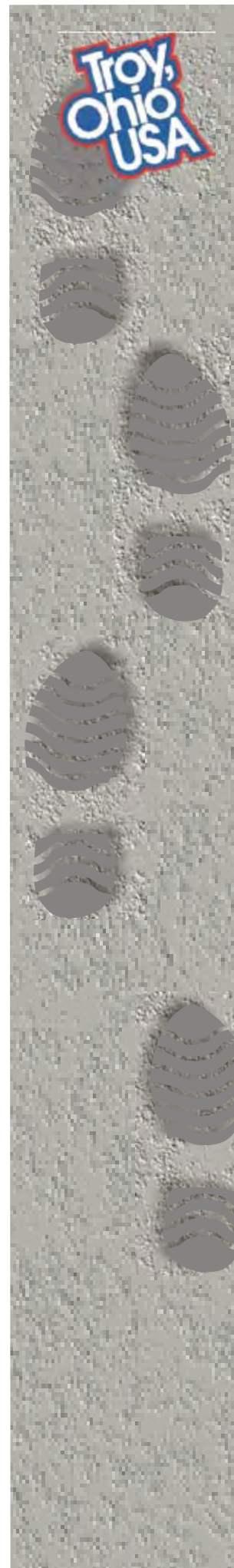


The focus of Troy's workshop was to find ways to improve the marketability of the Water Street corridor and tie it in with the other sections of downtown and the river corridor. Other issues that the workshop addressed included:

- ☐ Creating an Arts District along West and East Water Street, capitalizing on historically unique features, buildings and existing businesses
- ☐ Exploring ways to improve the walkability of the Public Square
- ☐ Creating a downtown bike loop connecting existing paths on the north end of the river

Workshop Attendees

- | | | |
|-----|-------------------|--|
| 1. | Mike Beamish | Mayor of Troy |
| 2. | Tonya Compton | MVRPC |
| 3. | Karen Purke | Troy Historical Society |
| 4. | Diane House | Miami County Health Department |
| 5. | Marty Baker | Troy City Council |
| 6. | Mark Cundiff | Troy Personnel Director |
| 7. | Lloyd Blankenship | Troy Senior Citizens Center |
| 8. | Ben Sutherly | Dayton Daily News |
| 9. | James Dando | Troy Planning & Development Director |
| 10. | Hans Landefeld | Miami Conservancy District |
| 11. | Linda Lee Jolly | Troy-Hayner Cultural Center |
| 12. | Stan Kegley | Troy Assistant City Engineer |
| 13. | Doug Wenning | Troy Planning and Development Director |
| 14. | Christy Herman | City of Troy Management Analyst |
| 15. | David Anderson | Troy Director of Public Services & Safety |
| 16. | Rosaleen Rayman | Business owner & Beautification Committee |
| 17. | Carole Kerber | Artist/Hayner Center/Downtown homeowner |
| 18. | Chuck Fox | Troy Main Street |
| 19. | Dan Brandewie | Miami County Planning Dept. |
| 20. | Bob Shook | Concord Twp/Miami Co Bike Trail Taskforce |
| 21. | Deborah Swan | Troy City Engineer |
| 22. | Ron Osburn | Troy Daily News |
| 23. | Steve McLain | Bakehouse Bread Co./Dtown Bus. Partnership |
| 24. | Tim Davis | Troy Intern |
| 25. | Kyle Hinkelman | Troy Intern |
| 26. | Tony Bergman | Troy Intern |
| 27. | Gregg Harris | Troy Assistant Development Director |
| 28. | Eric Fredericks | MVRPC |
| 29. | Ken LeBlanc | MVRPC |



Ideas Generated

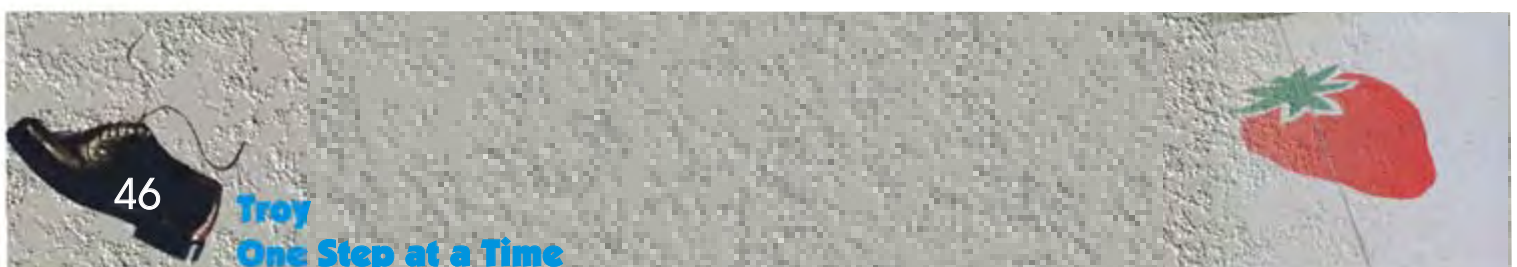
- ☐ Create a bike loop along Water Street from Market to Adams Street
- ☐ Create a boardwalk along the south bank of the Great Miami River
- ☐ Create a pedestrian bridge across the Great Miami from the “WE” sculpture
- ☐ Create a pedestrian promenade along the east side of the courthouse out to the river and “WE” sculpture while retaining the existing fountains
- ☐ Redevelop the homes on Pearson Court along the river
- ☐ Add a patio deck at The Brewery facing the river
- ☐ Create an arts district along Water St. (like the Short North in Columbus) with gateways at the ending points of the district
- ☐ Add public access points to the river for aquatic or passive recreation
- ☐ Use the previous hardware store building and The Brewery as art galleries
- ☐ Re-open the power plant building as a historic building
- ☐ Turn Water Street into a bike boulevard or a one-way street
- ☐ Add landscaping and way-finding signs to the parking lots along Water Street
- ☐ Make improvements to the Market Street and Adams Street bridges for safer and better accessibility for walkers and bikers
- ☐ Add benches along the waterfront near the Pearson homes
- ☐ At the traffic circle: remove the stoplights, move pedestrian crosswalks out away from the circle with a distance buffer for vehicles leaving the circle. Use raised speed humps for the pedestrian crossing (This will reduce decision making for motorists and pedestrians)



Walking Route



The decision to walk or bike usually takes into account the distance of the trip, perceived safety of the route, and the comfort and convenience of walking or biking versus an alternative mode. *AASHTO Guide for Planning Design, and Operation of Pedestrian Facilities, August 2001*



Workshop Evaluation

The most useful part of this workshop was:

- (9) Discussion, map work, ideas generated after the walk
- (4) Walking audit and ideas generated
- (2) PowerPoint, great presentation on traffic planning
- (1) Interaction with city planners and citizens
- (1) Skills

The least useful part of the workshop was:

- (3) Not applicable/nothing
- (1) Walking audit
- (1) Introduction

What specific next steps you would like the community to take?

- (7) Action on ideas from workshop: strategic planning, design and implementation
- (1) Use all empty spaces
- (1) Water Street improvements
- (1) Activities on the water
- (1) Downtown - evaluate the traffic circle
- (1) Continue the sidewalk program
- (1) Connect Troy, Tipp City, Piqua

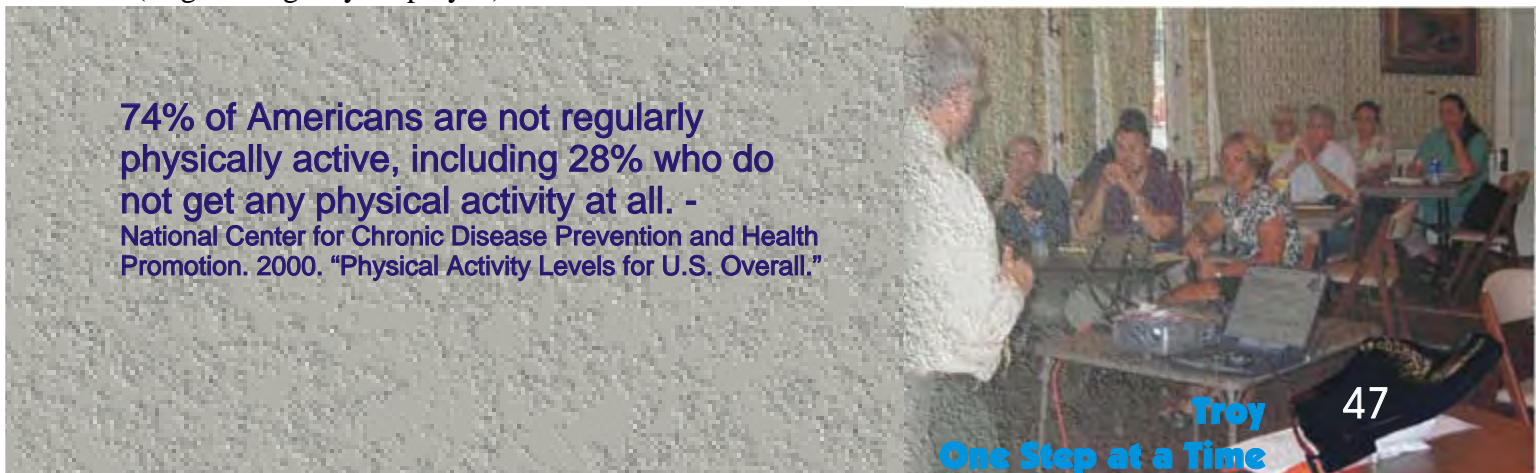
What specific next steps are you willing to take?

- ☐ "Coalition."
- ☐ "Set up meetings, forums."
- ☐ "Hammer away at city hall."
- ☐ "Working with the planning (department) to finish."
- ☐ "Whatever it takes."
- ☐ "The city is ready to give ideas to Council."
- ☐ "Would participate if asked."
- ☐ "Work with community as a community stakeholder."
- ☐ "Participate in implementation."
- ☐ "Give my input."
- ☐ "Miami County bikepath chairman."
- ☐ "Be involved in any steering committee or focus groups working on plan."

Additional Comments:

- ☐ "Good job!" (Resident)
- ☐ "Thank you for inviting me." (Local business employee)
- ☐ "I think, if time permitted, it would be useful to include cameras in the walkabout by the participants." (Regional agency employee)

74% of Americans are not regularly physically active, including 28% who do not get any physical activity at all. - National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. 2000. "Physical Activity Levels for U.S. Overall."



Local Media Coverage

Dayton Daily News
June 19, 2004

Troy seeks more 'walkable' downtown

Workshop looks at ways to make area more pedestrian- and bike-friendly

By BEN SUTHERLY
bsutherly@DaytonDailyNews.com

TROY—The city's network of recreational trails may be growing, but runners and bicyclists often must take a back seat to motorists if they venture downtown.

During a four-hour workshop June 17 at the Troy-Hayner Cultural Center, more than 25 people representing local governments and various walks of life discussed ways to make Troy's downtown a more pedestrian-friendly, "walkable" place — and, in doing so, perhaps even spur more business

for merchants.

The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission received a \$40,000 grant from the National Center of Bicycling and Walking and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to conduct the Troy workshop, as well as seven others held in Brookville, Centerville/Washington Twp., Dayton, Kettering, Piqua, West Carrollton and Xenia.

Kristin Bennett of the Genesee Transportation Council in

Rochester, N.Y., said walkable communities are key in fostering a community where residents can get fit, where senior citizens can maintain a measure of independence, and where children younger than 16 can get around.

Bennett said, nationwide, only 13 percent of trips to school are now made on foot or by bike.

The workshop included an hour-long walk along Oxford and Water streets, Pearson Court and Mulberry and Main streets in an

effort to identify ways to make the downtown more pedestrian-friendly.

Steve McLain, co-owner of Bakehouse Bread and Cookie Co., wants to encourage bicycle and pedestrian traffic in the Great Miami River corridor to cross the river and visit Troy's downtown business district.

Otherwise, McLain fears, a big marketing opportunity could

PLEASE SEE TROY ON 11

TROY

Seeking way to make city bike friendly

CONTINUED FROM 1

bypass downtown Troy, especially when bicyclists from the Dayton area begin traveling through Troy via a Miami County bike path now under construction.

"I think everyone is going to be surprised how much traffic materializes when these connections are made," McLain said.

Charlie Gandy, a bicycle and pedestrian advocate from Austin, Texas, who specializes in community design, said adding a bike lane to the North Market Street bridge might be one way to bring more bicyclists downtown.

Adding a bike lane also would create a buffer for high school

students and other pedestrians crossing the bridge, and would encourage motorists to slow down as they approach the Public Square, he said.

Workshop participants also discussed the possibility of placing islands and bollards along Main and Market streets within a block of the Public Square to slow traffic and make the square more pedestrian-friendly. Such a move might allow for the removal of traffic signals in the square.

David Anderson, the city's public service and safety director, said administrators had been considering those changes. Given the enthusiasm at the workshop for such a move, he said he may bring the proposed changes before the City Council sooner than he had intended.

Other ideas mentioned at the workshop include:

► Transforming Water Street into a boulevard, designating the area an art district, and making better use of the county's former power plant.

► Better landscaping around county-owned parking lots to soften their appearance.

► Placing additional signs in the downtown area to help visitors find their way.

► Putting public restrooms downtown.

► Encouraging additional use of Prouty Plaza.

► Creating more parking for bicyclists.

► Installing crosswalks where Oxford and Short streets intersect with West Main Street.

► Installing crosswalk signals whose "count-down" displays give pedestrians a better idea of how much time they have to cross the street.

City officials said a new Adams Street bridge, which likely will be built within a decade, also would be more pedestrian- and bike-friendly.

Anderson said he will relay the workshop discussions to the council for possible action.

Contact Ben Sutherly at 335-0509.



Troy Daily News
June 19, 2004

Daily ^{Troy} News

Saturday, June 19, 2004

Volume 96, Number 263

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an award-winning Brown Publishing Co. newspaper

'Walkability' commendable Group explores city's pedestrian accessibility

BY RON OSBURN
Staff Writer

rosburn@tdnpublishing.com

Charles Gandy paused at the northeast corner of Public Square and smiled.

"This is what other communities want to become," he said.

Gandy, of Austin, Texas, is a nationally known expert in community design and bicycle and pedestrian advocacy. He made his comments on a warm, muggy Thursday

afternoon as he led a "walking audit" of the downtown Troy area.

Gandy said Troy rates high on the "walkability" scale, which measures how accessible and safe a community is for cyclists and pedestrians.

"I commend the city on their efforts so far," he said.

Gandy's first-ever visit to Troy was part of a one-day Walkable Communities

Workshop, presented by the Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission and the National Center for Bicycling and Walking. It was coordinated by the Troy Planning and

■ CONTINUED ON PAGE A2

At right, Stan Kegley, assistant city engineer, Linda Lee Jolly, of the Troy-Hayner Cultural Center, and Deborah Swan, city engineer, stroll down West Water Street Thursday during the Walkable Communities Workshop.



STAFF PHOTO/RON OSBURN

'Walkability' commendable

■ CONTINUED FROM A1

Development Department and the Troy-Hayner Cultural Center.

The workshop began with a presentation inside a Hayner meeting room by Gandy and Kristan Bennett, a Walkable Communities Workshop instructor from Rochester, N.Y., on challenges associated with walking in Troy and what constitutes a walkable community.

After the presentation, a group of about 30 community members and local government leaders joined Gandy and Bennett on a one-mile looping jaunt from the Hayner Cultural Center on West Main Street, down Water Street to North Mulberry Street, then west back down Main Street to the Hayner.

"(Troy) is similar to Rochester. Nice, wide sidewalks; large shade trees and the great, old buildings. It's obvious there's been a lot of work done on the streetscape," Bennett said, during one of several stops along the way.

"I'm also impressed with the wide range of community members who are represented (at the workshop) today," Bennett said.

At a stop on the North Market Street Bridge, Gandy said the city should continue working toward developing a recreational trail along the levee on the south side of the river. Farther east, at Pearson Court — a one-block row of large, white,

older duplexes facing the river — Gandy noted that, "If you had a trail running along here, it would significantly change the value of these homes."

Pausing at Prouty Plaza, with Aka Percyma's multi-colored "Sunrise, Sunset" mural along the Mayflower Theater's eastern outer wall as a backdrop, Gandy said he also advocated artwork throughout a community.

"Art defines what is unique and special about a town," he said.

Following the walking audit, attendees assembled back at Hayner and broke into small groups to prioritize walkability problems and barriers they observed, and develop possible strategies and solutions.

Funding assistance for Thursday's workshop was provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Something is always happening at:

The Avalanche Lounge

1375 ST. RT. 55, Troy, OH
Located at The Hometown Inn
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Open Daily at 4:00pm
440-6448
MON: \$1.00 Draft Night

Troy

One Step at a Time



Walkable Communities Workshop Wrap-up



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Regional Media Coverage

Dayton Daily News

July 1, 2004

MVRPC plans walkable cities

Downtown designs encourage pedestrian traffic

By Nicole Lark

Dayton Daily News

DAYTON | The Miami Valley Regional Planning Commission is guiding local cities to step up to a new Walkable Communities program, which will help promote downtown business.

After a series of workshops in June in Xenia, Centerville, Kettering, Dayton, West Carrollton, Piqua, Troy and Brookville, the MVRPC is keeping in close contact with city planning officials to plan new sidewalks and trails.

Charlie Gandy of Livable Communities Inc., an Austin, Texas-based consulting firm, and Kristin Bennett, a transportation planner from Rochester, N.Y., spoke at sessions attended by city planners. Plans call for eventually linking the eight communities to the Great Miami River Corridor trail.

The trail now links Xenia, Dayton and West Carrollton, and will include Kettering. Brookville will be linked by the Wolf Creek Bikeway. By developing trails, the MVRPC wants to encourage commerce in historic downtowns.

"The downtowns are the heart and soul of the community," Gandy said. "They're often neglected, but never abandoned."

By improving the quality of established trails, businesses are able to provide amenities to walkers, which could attract more sales.

Bennett spoke in particular about the aesthetic aspects of connecting trails to a downtown area. Her recommendations included signage to indicate where a trail might lead, and mile markers for those who choose walking as a fitness alternative.

In downtown areas, Bennett focused on making sidewalks more appealing to the community. Drawing from examples in several towns in New York state, including Rochester and Seneca Falls, Bennett proposed specific lighting, crosswalk design and planters to promote a visually pleasing walkway.

In towns like Centerville, the downtown district is almost inaccessible to walkers because of heavy traffic. "We're going to paint crosswalks to join neighborhoods where people can cross into downtown," said Centerville city planner Ryan Lee.

The MVRPC is compiling final reports that should be finished within the next few weeks.

In Piqua, where pedestrian-friendly places like the Linear Park already exist, it's a matter of connecting established walkways to business districts.



Walkable Communities Evaluation

At the end of each workshop, participants were asked to fill out an evaluation form. The first five questions on the form asked participants to rate the workshops on certain aspects, and the remaining questions were open-ended. The results of the evaluation forms are listed below.

The PowerPoint presentation was:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Xenia	70%	30%	0%	0%
Centerville	70%	30%	0%	0%
Kettering	63%	37%	0%	0%
Dayton	70%	30%	0%	0%
West Carrollton	100%	0%	0%	0%
Piqua	70%	30%	0%	0%
Troy	29%	71%	0%	0%
Brookville	53%	1%	6%	0%
TOTAL	62%	38%	1%	0%

The walking audit/walkabout was:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Xenia	60%	40%	0%	0%
Centerville	67%	33%	0%	0%
Kettering	37%	63%	0%	0%
Dayton (heavy rain)	22%	33%	44%	0%
West Carrollton	67%	33%	0%	0%
Piqua	74%	26%	0%	0%
Troy	33%	67%	0%	0%
Brookville	76%	24%	0%	0%
TOTAL	55%	41%	4%	0%



Walkable Communities Evaluation

The discussion of possible local strategies and next steps was:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Xenia	60%	40%	0%	0%
Centerville	70%	30%	0%	0%
Kettering	42%	53%	5%	0%
Dayton	20%	70%	10%	0%
West Carrollton	80%	20%	0%	0%
Piqua	65%	35%	0%	0%
Troy	53%	41%	6%	0%
Brookville	53%	47%	0%	0%
TOTAL	54%	43%	3%	0%

Overall, how useful was this workshop to you?

	Very	Somewhat	A Little	Not at all
Xenia	56%	44%	0%	0%
Centerville	90%	10%	0%	0%
Kettering	74%	26%	0%	0%
Dayton	90%	10%	0%	0%
West Carrollton	83%	17%	0%	0%
Piqua	96%	4%	0%	0%
Troy	78%	17%	6%	0%
Brookville	94%	6%	0%	0%
TOTAL	84%	15%	1%	0%

Overall, how useful do you think this workshop was or will be to this community?

	Very	Somewhat	A Little	Not at all
Xenia	60%	30%	10%	0%
Centerville	100%	0%	0%	0%
Kettering	67%	33%	0%	0%
Dayton	70%	20%	10%	0%
West Carrollton	83%	17%	0%	0%
Piqua	96%	4%	0%	0%
Troy	72%	28%	0%	0%
Brookville	88%	13%	0%	0%
TOTAL	80%	18%	2%	0%



Lessons Learned

A common theme frequently stressed during the workshops was that communities considered successful often have a “heart and soul,” a physical place that defines the community and provides it with a sense of direction. This place often functions as a stimulus for community development; that is, the community will often reflect the area that serves as its centerpiece (such as a downtown or a regional shopping district). In smaller towns, the original downtown can serve as the catalyst. In larger cities, there may be several places that can act as the “heart and soul,” but ultimately the downtown will serve as the main focus point.

Richard Florida, author of *The Rise of the Creative Class*, writes about “Generica,” American communities that are all alike on the surface and have few features to distinguish them from other communities. Such communities rely on attracting big-box retail stores, strip-shopping centers, and similar development to increase their economic revenues. Unfortunately, what often happens to these communities is that they are confronted by problems when these developments decide to locate in competing communities, or the community's economy is undermined when the same business opens a second location nearby. Several experts have recently noted that highly skilled workers and businesses in the U.S. are seeking areas that give them a “sense of place,” an area with a distinctive identity or character. The types of strip malls, large-scale retail developments and generic housing subdivisions built over the last fifty years usually fail to accomplish this, and more communities are starting to realize the importance of creating a sense of place to be competitive in the market.

For the local workshop program, eight communities each chose a location to focus on and, surprisingly, each community chose to explore the area considered to be its downtown. Community leaders recognized the importance of engaging people with the ideas presented at the workshops, and that the best community asset to address is its unique downtown. The ideas presented at the workshops not only relate to making those areas more walkable and bikeable, but also apply to creating a welcoming and enjoyable environment, and creating a marketable place that enhances the economic vitality of the community. Presentations by the facilitators demonstrated these concepts very well and many of the ideas were embraced by participating communities.

Perhaps the most important lesson learned from the program is that the workshop and walking audit offer a great opportunity to open the eyes of participants with a hands-on educational experience. Actually experiencing the interaction of pedestrian, bike, and automobile traffic, as well as the consequences of design details, is valuable. The workshops result in participants thinking about specific solutions for improving their community by reclaiming streets for safe walking and biking, and changing the philosophies of those able to affect major change. The Miami Valley Region and MVRPC highly recommend the Walkable Community Workshops to any region looking to find ways to improve the quality of life, economic vitality, and overall livability of communities in their region.



Suggestions for Future Workshops

Suggestions for Workshop Program Improvements

- ❑ Have the workshop facilitators submit their preferences to the MPO coordinators before the workshop. This would apply to the room layout, the agenda (including starting times and lengths of time for each segment), and whatever else the facilitator feels is necessary. The layout of the room and the agendas available on the website were not the preferred methods of our facilitators and we changed them right before each workshop.
- ❑ Shorten the local community coordinator's presentation to no more than five minutes. Let the facilitators have that extra time for their presentations or the walking audit. This should be mentioned to the local coordinators as well.
- ❑ Stress to the MPO coordinators that the workshops will take a lot of coordination effort for several months beforehand, and that on the week of the workshops all of their (working hours) time must be devoted to the workshops. If the region is very spread out, MPO coordinators should expect very little free time. They will need to arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the workshops for setup.

Suggestions for Future Workshop Coordinators

- ❑ Have MPO coordinators stress the importance of the workshops to the local coordinators. Make sure that they understand that in the weeks leading up to the workshop that the workshop should take the highest priority on their agendas. If they cannot commit this kind of time, then someone else should direct the effort. We found that the best workshops in our area directly reflected the enthusiasm and the amount of time and effort spent by the local coordinator on the workshop.
- ❑ The local coordinators must get the right people to attend the workshops. It is absolutely essential that at least some people from each category of the potential invitees list attend (the list is very helpful). And most importantly, get some people with decision-making and implementation power to the workshops (preferably people enthusiastic about walkability issues), because the workshops are far too valuable to not be attended.
- ❑ Have a person take the meeting minutes at each of the workshops. During the “generation of ideas” portion of the workshop, list the ideas generated by each group. This way you can see the consensus each group had with the others (See the Piqua Ideas Generated section for an example of this).
- ❑ Keep the walking audit route short but sweet, probably limited to around six blocks. There is a lot to discuss on each block and many of our workshops walking routes were too lengthy and we either did not get to focus on the main areas that we wanted to address, or we had to shorten the team consensus building at the end of the workshops.
- ❑ Take pictures of good practices of walkability/bikeability in your region for the facilitators to look at. This will give them a feel for the region and an idea of how you view your region.



What's Next

Based upon the success of the June 2004 workshops and the role walkable communities play in promoting alternative transportation strategies, MVRPC plans to continue and expand upon its Walkable Communities program. Several additional member jurisdictions have requested such workshops in their communities. MVRPC also plans to add more material to the Walkable Communities pages on its website, including program updates and best practices, both in our region and around the country. MVRPC will continue to coordinate with local jurisdictions on this effort and assist in any way possible. The following summarizes additional pedestrian planning activities that MVRPC anticipates undertaking during the current fiscal year:

- ❑ Coordinate “Walkable Communities Workshops” for member jurisdictions and integrate cycling information as well
- ❑ Encourage members to make their jurisdictions more walkable. In general, people will walk more to a destination if they are offered suitable facilities (i.e., sidewalks, curb cuts, marked crosswalks, etc.)
- ❑ Develop a pedestrian access plan in areas that staff identifies as high growth areas (i.e., Dayton Mall/Miami Township) to encourage walking to neighborhood facilities
- ❑ Coordinate with public health organizations (American Heart Association, etc.) to encourage walking to a destination as part of an overall daily exercise regimen
- ❑ Coordinate with area schools to encourage students to walk (or bike) to school
- ❑ Demonstrate some visual examples of how Sustainable Growth could positively impact their communities. Using software such as *CommunityViz*, a PowerPoint presentation could be created that features actual photographs of existing conditions that “morph” into a much more desirable plan (pedestrian-friendly designed streetscape, sheltered transit stop, etc.). This would depict a “before” and “after” visual that would be easily understandable



Information Sources

Government Sites

MVRPC Walkable Communities Program

<http://www.mvrpc.org/walkable/>

Ohio Department of Transportation

<http://www.dot.state.oh.us/bike>

USDOT National Transportation Library Pedestrians and Bicycles

<http://ntl.bts.gov/display.cfm?sub=e1&cat=5>

FHWA Pedestrian/Bicycle Safety

http://safety.fhwa.dot.gov/programs/ped_bike.htm

FHWA Bicycle & Pedestrian Program

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bikeped/>

Architectural & Transportation Barriers Compliance Board (US Access Board)

<http://access-board.gov/>

Other Sites

National Center for Bicycling and Walking

<http://www.bikewalk.org/>

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

<http://www.rwjf.org/>

Bike Miami Valley

<http://www.bikemiamivalley.org/>

Miami Valley Rail Trails

<http://www.miamivalleytrails.org/>

Ohio Bicycle Federation

<http://www.ohiobike.org/>

America Bikes

<http://americabikes.org/>

America WALKs

<Http://www.americawalks.org/>



Information Sources (continued)

American Planning Association

<http://www.planning.org/>

American Trails

<http://americantrails.org/>

Association of Pedestrian & Bicycle Professionals

<http://apbp.org/>

Bicycling Life

<http://bicyclinglife.org/>

Bikes Belong Coalition

<http://bikesbelong.org/>

Center for Livable Communities

<http://www.lgc.org/center/>

International Walk to School

<http://www.iwalktoschool.org/>

League of American Bicyclists

<http://www.bikeleague.org/>

Livable Communities, Inc.

<http://www.livablecommunities.com/>

National Main Street Center

<http://www.mainstreet.org/>

Partners for Livable Communities

<http://www.livable.com/>

Partnership for a Walkable America

<http://www.walkableamerica.org/>

Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center

<http://www.bicyclinginfo.com/>

Perils for Pedestrians

<http://www.pedestrians.org/>

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

<Http://www.railtrails.org/>

